

PRESIDENT'S REPORT by Kevin Busswood

The FSA is instituting a monthly newsletter to improve the quantity and quality of information flowing to you from the executive and from the committees where the FSA is represented. The newsletter will take the form of a number of columns in which representatives will make known to you both the issues being considered in a committee and any highlights which you should attend to.

We hope you will take the time to read and respond to the newsletter. Commentary should be addressed to the columnist who has excited your anger, pity, or whatever.

Executive

Over the past few weeks the executive has considered whether our existing union structure is adequate to the environment in which we operate. At our retreat in October we recognized that we have difficulties in communication within the union. The area-rep structure and the newsletter represent partial solutions to the problem. We are also looking at initiatives which will address the problems of committee representation and our ability to analyse and respond to the educational environment in BC.

All of these issues will be discussed further in coming newsletters. Please make your opinions known as issues are raised.

In mid-December the executive will be attending an afternoon and evening meeting with the Management Council. The meeting, suggested by Barry Moore, will consider issues of mutual concern to the FSA and the management. Specifically, we will be looking at "internal communi-

cations", management structure, and ministry pressures on the College. This meeting is evidence of a new willingness by management to hear problems and seek solutions in a more democratic fashion than was previously possible.

More in the next newsletter.

Provincial Union

I promised early in the year to inundate you with material about forming a provincial union. My failure to do this results not from a lapse of memory but rather from a sudden dearth of activity on the issue. The PCPE (President's Council of Post-Secondary Educators), or the new CFF, has met three or more times. The structure which has emerged looks like what CFF should have looked like. Any resemblance between PCPE and a union is purely unintentional. I won't try to encapsulate all discussion thus far. Early in the new year you will receive an information package about PCPE. At that time, we will have to consider whether or not we wish to relive history.

Many of the smaller (i.e., hinterland) colleges are open to a provincial union, however they (we) recognize that there are too few to adequately fund such an organization. There are movements within a couple of colleges toward affiliating with BCGEU. I will keep you abreast of any developments.

Anyone wishing to read PCPE minutes should contact me.

AGREEMENTS COMMITTEE by Scott Fast

The FSA members on the Agreements Committee are Victoria Nowell and Scott Fast.

The Committee met several times this fall in response to requests from administrators and the FSA grievance chairperson for Committee opinions.

The Committee opinion of greatest interest to the majority of FSA members had to do with Article 13.4 of the Collective Agreement, the provision for the "Selection Advisory Committee" in the hiring

process. The Agreements Committee reaffirmed that the wording of the article was clear as stated, and interpreted "the phrase 'appropriate area' to mean functional area in the sense of roles which interact in the dispensing of College duties." This means that the FSA members on selection advisory committees are not necessarily drawn from those employees who work beside the position to be filled, nor from those who answer to the same supervisor, but rather from among those employees who actually interact with the position on a regular basis in the dispensing of College duties.

ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

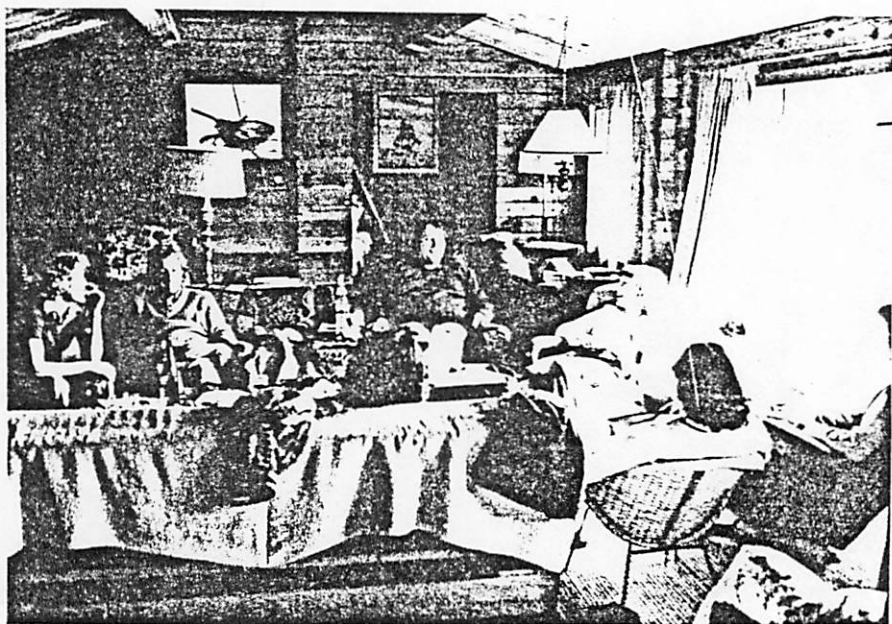
As some of you may already be aware, the FSA Executive spent a day and a half together on a retreat in order to come up with ideas that would provide a stronger two-way communication system with all members of the FSA

This newsletter is a start in that direction. Distinct from the FSA News, the FSA Newsletter provides current and important FSA information from the various committees at the College.

Any problem which you may have regarding your work at the College should be dealt with through one of these committees.

Remember that a committee is only as good as the membership makes it. If you have a question, problem, or disagreement (or agreement!) with any of the committees, don't hesitate to talk to your FSA representative on that committee or your area rep.

Read the reports carefully - each is one half of what can be a strong two-way discussion with all of us at the College.



AT THE RETREAT (l to r) Cathie, Doug, Bev, Kevin, Laura, Leslie, Paul

JOB CLASSIFICATION AUDIT COMMITTEE by Eva Korelus

Those of you who attended the seminar on The Job Evaluation at FVC, held on November 22nd, should be fully aware of who and what the JCAC is. For those who could not attend this seminar there will be another workshop in December.

Plans to conduct a workshop on Writing a Job Description are being made; the tentative date has been set for December 6th. This will be of interest to all staff, and of special value to any supervisor. Flyers advertising the details will be posted.

Sharon Syrette plans to resign from the Committee, and so far I have not been able to change her mind. In other words, the search is on. Are there any volunteers for the new FSA representative to the JCAC? Please contact me if you are interested.

The JCAC has been meeting for over one year; the results to date have been most encouraging. We are presently working on the procedures, as with all new committees, this takes time and experience.

Should anyone have any queries, please feel free to contact me.

TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE COMMITTEE by Richard Heyman

Technological change is an issue that concerns all of us. We are living in an era which is very strong on change. If we allow changes to take place without some kind of studied control, we may someday find ourselves out of a job with no recourse or input to an appeal procedure.

However, we do have a system and we do have input into its procedure. The Technological Change Committee (TCC) will provide that input. It is a body formed by the letter of agreement in the current Contract which deals with Article 18. The

members on this committee are Eric Woodroff, Judy Inouye, Richard Heyman, and Bryan Hambley.

Our meetings have started, and the issue of tightening up Article 18 is underway. The main concern of the TCC is to ensure that as few employees as possible are adversely affected by a technological change. Our committee will be creating stronger clauses which will allow for a closer scrutiny on the introduction of new equipment or procedures into the College.

Please don't hesitate to see either Judy or myself if you have any questions.

JOINT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

by Betty Hanafi

The Joint Professional Development Committee meets every third Wednesday, on Week 1 of the meeting schedule.

FSA members are: Adele Abernethy, Dick Bate, Don Calnek, Erling Close, Betty Hanafi (Chairperson), Diane MacLean, Barry Moore, Linda Riva, Pat Scott, and Eric Woodroff.

Since September, the Committee:

- elected Betty Hanafi as Committee Chairperson rather than follow the previous year's practice of having a joint chair
- changed the date for elections of Divisional P.D. Allocations Subcommittees from September to March, in order to provide continuity over the summer and early fall
- conducted a thorough review of the guidelines governing allocation of P.D. money and time
- instituted an appeal procedure for individuals turned down by Divisional P.D. Allocations Subcommittees
- updated the P.D. Kit and Handbook (soon to be available from Campus Receptionists)
- instituted a monthly reporting system for divisional P.D. Allocations Subcommittees so that the Joint P.D. Committee will have current overview of all approved and rejected requests and the reason for each
- heard Diane Morrison of the Ministry of Education outline the role the Ministry is playing in the development and facilitation of professional development in the colleges
- appointed June Johnstone to represent FVC at a provincial workshop for P.D. committee members to be held in Vancouver on Nov. 30 and Dec. 1 and 2

Matters the Committee will be addressing in the future include:

- the Spring P.D. Day
- procedures for electing Divisional P.D. Allocations Subcommittees

The Committee would welcome any input from anyone in the College community. Please feel free to address your concerns to any of the FSA members on the Committee.

GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE by Laura Neame

A number of issues have arisen in the past few months from the grievance process, some of which have been helpful in pinpointing areas to be clarified in future contract negotiations.

One is a trial period for staff. Right now the contract does not provide for any probationary period after the initial three months. In the case of unsatisfactory performance, therefore, there is no mid-point between being an employee without term or being fired. A trial period would allow regular feedback in order to improve performance with, of course, full access to the grievance procedure.

There have also been a number of problems around contract types, particularly "C" contracts. These will be explored in a joint meeting with the administration.

The Selection Advisory Committee format has had some growing pains, including straight mechanical problems with notification and dates, as well as methods of FSA representation on the committees. Many of these have been ironed out, and, in addition, the Management Group has developed selection procedure guidelines which should help prevent problems from occurring in the future.

In the area of position reclassification, staff should be aware that if they feel their job description needs updating and/or repointing, they can contact the FSA reps on the Job Classification Audit Committee (JCAC) directly. JCAC will then refer it to the supervisor. This is according to Article 21.5.1 b of the Collective Agreement. Please speak to your area rep if you would like to do this, and he/she will advise you further.

The new area rep system has gotten off to a good start. There have been two meetings so far, and the area reps are quickly developing a knowledge of contract clauses. They are a valuable resource and can assist you resolving issues.

COLLEGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
by Paul Herman

This fall, as FSA Faculty Vice-President sitting on the CAC, I reported to faculty and directors about CAC matters. With the new FSA reporting system, I will now report on the CAC to all FSA members.

It may surprise some that there is anything to report from CAC, but there is. Several policies have been recommended to the College Board and passed or returned to us for further comment. The Board has also formed its own Policy Committee to generate policy and to examine CAC policy recommendations.

Self-Study

CAC is part of the self-study, thus providing us with a good opportunity to see how to exploit CAC's potential as a crucial democratic policy-forming body. If you have comments to make regarding the CAC's effectiveness and adequacy of representation (see readily available CAC Terms of Reference and Membership), please get them to me by Nov. 26. In addition, CAC will consider its relationship to the new Board Policy Committee and its role according to the Colleges Act.

Exchange Policy

This policy was proposed by Alan Cameron's CAC Subcommittee nearly a year ago. It contains provisions for a Liaison Officer, Eligibility, Negotiation For and Length of Exchange, Selection Process, Qualifications, Salaries and Increments, Tuition Fees, Expenses, and Reporting to the College. It was also reported that the Board is willing to fund some expenses if such funds are controlled by the Professional Development Committee.

The proposal was thoroughly discussed, some clarifying amendments were made, and it passed second reading and will be forwarded to the Board. (The Board is also considering a CAC-recommended policy on exchanges of student groups.)

College Activities Program Policy

In the early fall, CAC recommended a policy to the Board that would have given a board with a majority of student representatives control over funds spent on student activities. However, the Dean of Student Services spoke against the policy at the Board meeting and instead proposed that Student Services continue administering these funds in consultation with a board with no less than 50% student representation. In addition to its apparent endorsement of the Dean's proposal, the Board proposed to levy an additional student fee of approximately 5% of tuition fees (after also proposing to raise tuition fees by 10%). You may be aware that there has been sufficient student unhappiness about these proposals to cause students to appear at the last Board meeting. (It must have been quite a shock: women - appearing regarding the Women's Access Proposal - and students at the same meeting. At least the students weren't told that their place is in the home.) The Board referred its proposals back to the CAC for further comment.

Further comment there was, taking most of the CAC meeting. Much of it sounded familiar, echoing students' problems with administration in past years and early FSA problems: students (employees) will not administrate money and their affairs responsibly, the Dean is uncomfortable that he would be responsible for money and activities over which he does not have total control (remember Management's Rights? they're not dead - read on).

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EDUCATIONAL LEAVES REPORT by Alan Martin

The Educational Leaves committee has the job of producing a policy on educational leaves which should be included in our collective agreement next year. The committee has met twice, and we have reached general agreement that paid and unpaid leave should be available to faculty and staff employees. Eligible activities should include research and informal study as well as the more formal courses of instruction. We have also agreed that there should be several types of educational leave classified by the duration of the leave.

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College Advisory Committee (cont. from previous page)

Finally, the technical problem is invoked that a student board is not legally responsible for its actions unless it is a legally constituted body.

Consequently, a motion was passed recommending that the Board table its proposals pending the establishment of a Student Society under the Societies Act, and that the Board agree that forming a Student Society is of the highest priority for student affairs at FVC. The latter provision implies that funds and organizational assistance will be provided. With a Student Society formed, issues of how it is to be funded can be dealt with in a more specific context.

LRC Roles Policy

The Board also referred this recommended policy to its Policy Committee. At least one Board member, whom the Chilliwack Progress reported as Ross Belsher, was concerned that the recommended policy's endorsement of B.C. and Canadian Library Associations' Statements on Intellectual Freedom should be accompanied by complementary statements on the responsibility that accompanies such freedom (a familiar comment to those who have negotiated with the Board for similar statements to be included in the Collective Agreement). The Board now recommends that the following Management Rights preamble be included:

"While recognizing that the College Board is responsible for the management of the College and therefore reserves the right to approve all materials provided and all instruction given in the College"

This preamble appears to violate Article 12.4 of the Collective Agreement and threatens the

intellectual integrity of the College by allowing the College to order the elimination of any materials or ideas it finds offensive. It seems possible to temper this gross tool while acquiescing to the Board's prerogatives. The preamble will be considered at the next CAC meeting.

Conference Policy

Another item for the next CAC meeting is this proposal by the Board. Most of it appears fine, but two provisions are worrisome: that conferences conducted by the College must pay for themselves, and that the Board must approve the theme and the program of all conferences. Rather than being delighted by the prestige a good conference brings to the College and by the efforts of employees, often in addition to their regular workload, to mount a conference, the Board appears eager to avoid association with any conferences that can't be sold, and to control the issues a conference can deal with, apparently not trusting the Dean of Community Education to make these decisions. It makes one wonder why anyone would, or whether anyone will, bother to put on a conference through the College: what does the College contribute?

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I suspect part of the problem right now is that representatives of the CAC and the Board Policy Committee do not meet informally to discuss their concerns and recommendations. The FSA found relations with the Board greatly improved by the existence of committees, such as Agreements and Labour/Management, where there is regular, informal, non-adversarial contact, rather than mere exchanges of negotiation proposals on paper annually. Perhaps similar liaison needs to be established here.

Educational Leaves Report (cont. from previous page)

Some of the subjects which we have considered, but have not come up for serious discussion as yet, are:

- a) Rate of pay while on leave.
- b) The structure and terms of reference of the committee which will allocate leave.
- c) Rules for eligibility of an employee for paid leave.
- d) Exchanges as a form of educational leave.

Ron Laye and Alan Martin are your representatives on the Educational Leaves Committee. If you would like to express your opinion on anything relating to leaves, contact one of us. Educational leave can be extremely valuable to your personal and professional development, and it is up to you to help us make the best leaves policy we can.

LABOUR-MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
by Leslie Wood & Doug McDowell

The Labour-Management Committee (LMC) is a new committee in its first year of operation. Your representatives on this Committee are Doug McDowell and Leslie Wood, and the two members from management are Don Calnek (Bursar) and Ross Belsher (College Board). The Committee was deliberately set up as a forum in which matters of interest or concern to either the FSA or the administration could be brought up in an informal manner.

Ideally, potential problems are foreseen by members of the LMC far in advance of their becoming grievances, and, while the Committee does not have the authority to impose decisions, suggestions made by it are usually carried out because of the nature of its membership.

Some of the questions brought to the LMC so far are:

1. The modified work week for staff.
2. Contracts for ABE personnel in particular, short-term contracts in general.
3. Placement on scale of candidates who do not meet minimum qualifications.
4. Disciplinary procedures.

On the modified work week, the FSA members presented a paper outlining their arguments for a flexible modified work week which might vary from one area to another, following the decision made by the Agreements Committee when the issue was referred to it last spring. The Deans presented their arguments for a College-wide summer work hours policy but did not provide any specific reasons why they could not be implemented as stated in the contract, for example, areas in which there were complaints that the modified work week used in the past caused disruption in the areas or



(l to r) Kevin, Laura, Bev, Paul

poor service to the the College or the public. The LMC is still waiting for this information from the Deans. The Deans' slowness to respond is rapidly becoming more than just very irritating.

On the issue of contracts for ABE personnel, the problem was seen to be the large number of employees recently being given short-term contracts, and the slowness of the administration's attempt to regularize these positions wherever possible. Don and Ross agreed that the problem was of concern to the Board, and saw the source of it as being the nature of funding from the Ministry. However, they indicated that the Ministry is changing its policy on funding of RAC's, and that substantial amounts of money now dispersed as RAC's will be converted to regular funding. The Board made a commitment to come up with a long-term solution to the problem before negotiations begin, so that something can be incorporated into the new contract. It should be noted that we have consistently disagreed with administration in that we believe the problem of short-term contracts with no security can be handled using the existing contract regardless of what type of funding is being used.

The Committee is also presently discussing the incorporation of trial periods for staff into the contract, paralleling trial periods for faculty, and possible disciplinary procedures for staff. At present there is nothing specific in the contract on discipline. Another item which will be brought up is the issue of shift work for vocational teaching faculty; this is being presented by Walter Bissky.

This is a summary of the issues discussed so far by the LMC, and their outcomes. If you have any questions about them, see your LMC representatives, either Doug or Leslie.

CONTRACT COMMITTEE
by Doug McDowell

Well . . . it's getting to be that time of year again. By the time you've read this, you should have gotten several memos from me outlining the role of the shop stewards in the Contract Committee and a list of what your initial responses have indicated the major priorities are. As you've probably noticed, most of them are cost items. There are several important issues which all of us need to address. The FSA Executive will be facing them first before coming to you for your advice but . . . the sooner you begin to deal with them, discuss them, and ask about them, the better. As I see it, the most pressing issues are:

1. Economic Welfare and Security:

My present impression is that our salary scale is no longer as relatively good as it was; in areas such as paid leave, mileage, dental plans, etc., we are far behind many other colleges. We also have many people on "C" contracts. These people have no job security past their current contract. They must continually reapply for their jobs with no guarantee of renewal and no means to grieve or even complain if they are dropped.

If we go for what I believe is just in all areas, the costs will be significant. Do we push for all of them and possibly see the College reduce programs and staff or at least not increase as rapidly, or do we again take a smaller piece and work for increased security for many part-time people such as those on "C" contracts? If we do the latter, I would only find it acceptable if we gain good solid contracts for these people.

2. How do we add the settlement to this year's scale, i.e., do we simply throw the same percentage on all parts of the scale and therefore increase the difference between the extremes, or do we add a lump sum to each pay position, or do we do something different?

3. What action are you prepared to take if the College is unwilling to settle for a contract that we find acceptable and wants to go to arbitration? Will you consider job action and/or joining a larger union such as BCGEU as full or associate members?

If we want to have a realistic chance of making significant and useful steps forward this year, we need to be united on these issues and move.

I will be coming to you for your advice. Please be ready.